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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 001013

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA; NSC FOR SHAPIRO/KUMAR; DRL
FOR LIEBERMAN

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: ALLEGATIONS FOLLOW DEATH OF HAMAS DETAINEE IN PA
CUSTODY

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

Summary

¶1. (C) Hamas member Haitham Abdel Allah Amre died while in Palestinian Authority (PA) General Intelligence (GI) custody on June 15 in Hebron. According to PA GI official Mansour Ebwaini, Amre died in a failed escape attempt, falling from the third story of the building in which he was being held. Hamas official Mushir al-Masri claimed that Amre died as a result of torture at the hands of PA intelligence officers, and that he is the latest victim in a series of "assassinations" conducted by PA security forces in the West Bank. The PA Cabinet has decided to open an investigation. End Summary.

Family Requests Investigation;
Hamas Alleges Assassination

¶2. (C) Haitham Abdel Allah Amre, a Hamas member, was arrested by PA security forces on June 10 and was in GI custody at the time of his death on June 15. GI official Mansour Ebwaini told PolSpec on June 15 that Amre's death resulted from an accidental fall from the third story of his place of detention during an escape attempt. Amre's family has urged PA President Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) to open an investigation into the death. (The Amre family includes several Fatah officials, including Amre's brother Nidal Amre, a former Preventive Security Organization official.) Following a cabinet meeting, the PA announced the formation of an investigative commission. Amre's body was buried shortly following his death, and no exhumation is anticipated.

¶3. (SBU) Hamas spokesperson Mushir al-Masri disputed the PA's account, alleging that Amre was tortured and died at the hands of PA officials. In a press statement, al-Masri said that Amre's death and other alleged PA "assassinations" of Hamas officials diminished the chances of achieving Fatah-Hamas reconciliation. Al-Masri accused PA officials of providing "free services to the Israeli occupation, especially after Netanyahu's speech that denied all Palestinian rights." A number of Hamas representatives to the reconciliation talks have recently conditioned a reconciliation agreement with Fatah on a partial or total stoppage of operations by PA security forces targeting Hamas members in the West Bank.

¶4. (C) Comment: Post has no information at this time to confirm or deny the PA's account of the death. In a recent conversation with USG officials, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad acknowledged deficiencies in the PA's judicial/penal system, but stated that torture is not used by PA security forces against detainees.
WALLES